



WINNOWING FAN

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NEW EVANGELIZATION

PART TWENTY TWO

AT LAST, A SANE VOICE AMIDST THE CONFUSION

The Holy Father had announced a 'New Evangelization.' He, not only explained 'Evangelization', but gave the four complete steps that lead to Eternal Life. Evangelization is only the first step and it leads to the second step which is 'Porta Fidei.' The Pope set aside temporarily the last two steps for this 'Year of Faith' because only the first step is needed and this leads to the second step which is Faith.

Though the Holy Father gave this talk on 'New Evangelization' as early as in 2000, and though he gave many

indications of the great importance of this topic, very few seem to have gotten what he was saying. The word 'New Evangelization' had been quoted by many bishops in their speeches but they never came close to what the Pope was referring to. And all the efforts to implement the Pope's 'New Evangelization' that leads to 'Porta Fidei' had been total digressions from the main goal of the Holy Father.....from the 'Lineamenta,' to the 'Instrumentum Laboris,' to the 58 proposals made during the Bishop's Synod. A watcher of this scenario could only lose heart at what is happening to the Church. But at last, a tiny voice amidst the confusion.....a clear voice from the International Theological Commission.

The International Theological Commission is a group of Catholic theologians from around the world appointed by the Pope upon the suggestion of the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Each member has a renewable five year term and they meet together in person once every year for a week. Their main job is to advise the Magisterium of the Church especially the CDF. In support of the 'Year of Faith' proclaimed by Pope Benedict they came out offering their services. And their short declaration of assistance to the Church contained a perfect knowledge of the 'MIND' of Pope Benedict on his 'New Evangelization' that leads to 'Porta Fidei.' What a consolation to hear a perfect echo of Pope Benedict.

The 'Year of Faith' is for all Bishops, priests, brothers, nuns and all lay people to find out if they have Faith. No one is exempted. The inclusion of Bishops and priests was very clear from the 'Ratzinger Report,' from the 'Year of St. Paul,' from the 'Year of the Priests,' summarized in 'Veritatis Splendor,' and most clearly in the 'New Evangelization' that leads to 'Porta Fidei.' It is the Bishops and priests who are undergoing a crisis of Faith. The signs are all clear from the fact that no shepherd is sounding the proverbial trumpet mentioned by St. Paul, to the worldwide problem of priests that seems not to wane down, to the very Bishops who cannot pinpoint where the problem of the Church is. A brief review of 'what are the signs of Faith' shows that there is no Faith in the Church today

(with an exception that can only be described as the work of the grace of God).

This, of course, will redound to the crisis of Faith among the lay people who are taught by the bishops and priests. The crisis of Faith among the lay people cannot be blamed anywhere else except on the pastors.

The 'Lineamenta' and 'Instrumentum laboris' and the 58 proposals made by the bishop's synod are all working on the assumption that all the bishops and priests have the theological virtue of Faith and the only work to be done is to lead the laymen towards the 'door of Faith.' On the contrary, because they intentionally removed 'conversion' from their schema, this shows they have no Faith because conversion is essential to Faith and all who have Faith will emphasize the importance of conversion. Pope Benedict, seeing the trend of mind in the Bishop's Synod, re-emphasized the importance of conversion last March to priests and deacons. And the International Theological Commission emphasized that too saying: 'the message of conversion is central to the Year of Faith'and this is what the Bishop's documents intentionally omitted stating it was not important. Though Proposition 22 of the Bishop's Synod talked about 'conversion' its description does not approach at all the 'conversion' of Pope Benedict.

How in the first place did the laymen happen to have no Faith. Wasn't it because of the faithlessness of their

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could to solve the evils that beset the Church."
St. Teresa of Avila

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pastors and Bishops? A typical example is the speech of a Bishop-theologian, invited to address the Bishop's Synod, where he began by encouraging religious pluralism, a long-time heresy and recently condemned again by the Pope at the urging of the International theological commission during its sixth term...and followed by corrections world-wide of priests holding such heresy. And the speaker was a Bishop - theologian addressing the Bishop's Synod. And he is one of those who will evangelize? In fact in his speech he described his religious pluralism as Pope Benedict's 'New Evangelization.' Heresy and truth?

The 'Year of Faith' is a command of the Pope for Cardinals, Bishops, priests, brothers, sisters and all laymen.... without exemption, to examine themselves if they have Faith following the guidelines he had already given. It has to begin there. I know it is humiliating. But then we have to begin with humility somehow.

In the 'Year of Faith' all we have to learn is how the Act of Faith is made and what are the proper dispositions of the mind and free will that will help us receive the gift of Faith and respond to it properly. Nothing else. Everything that is being learned is in the natural level so everyone can do it.

Returning briefly to the Gospel of the 31st Sunday in Ordinary time we just have to do what the Scribe did to be near the 'Kingdom of God' (the words used by the Pope referring to Faith.) The Scribe had the knowledge that he should

love God with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his strength and with all his soul. One proper disposition that every soul should have is to know how the mind works...and then use his entire knowledge to know God. After knowing God his mind should instruct his free will to love God. That's it. That is one of the proper dispositions that prepares a soul to receive the gift of Faith. We still have to work on three more.

Who knows how the mind works? And one has to go into one's mind to see what it contains. Does it contain the knowledge of God or does it contain garbage? Considering our present age it is impossible to enter into our minds to find out what it contains because men's minds are continuously focused outside, towards the things of the world. There is no introspection. There is no knowing of oneself. We also have to know God and knowing God consists in going into one's mind and heart...which is the image and likeness of God. No one has time for that. Souls today would rather know the basketball scores than who is God. In short, analysis shows that conditions are not conducive to making the Act of Faith. So help is needed. And the Holy Father gave us these helps. Like strong medicine few will like it.

We cannot now form an adequate idea of the capacity for love that the soul will have in the next life, nor of that which it is at present.

St. Bernard

SERMON *in a sentence*

The good of our neighbor is advanced by things pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the soul rather than by things pertaining to the supplying of bodily needs, in proportion to the excellence of spiritual over corporal things... Spiritual works of mercy surpass corporal works of mercy.

We should, on the contrary, forget the offenses of our enemy, even though he neither repents nor amends, in imitation of Christ who prayed for those who crucified Him, and who, far from repenting, mocked Him... For the height of perfection is to love our enemies, and to pray for them as did the Lord Jesus.

One must, as St. Gregory said, honor man because he is man and made in the image and likeness of God, and not for anything that surrounds him (like riches, precious clothing, power, a noble name, or a multitude of friends and relations).

He who looks on himself as a son of God, ought, among other

things, to imitate our Lord especially in His love... God's love is not restricted to any individual, but embraces all in common, for God loves "all things that are," as is said in Wisdom 11:24. Most of all He loves men.

He who loves goes out from himself, in so far as he wills the good of his friend and works for it.

Love embraces two lives; active in the love of our neighbor, contemplative in the love of God.

Nothing so likens you to God, as to forgive him who has injured you.

He does not say, "Do not cause a sinner to cease," but do not judge; that is, be not a bitter judge; correct him indeed, but not as an enemy seeking revenge, but as a physician applying a remedy.

God looks more to the pious mind of the giver, than to the abundance of the thing given.

Let a man greatly reprove whatever is in his power; what is not so let him bear with patience, and mourn over with affection, until He from above shall correct and heal, and let him defer till harvest-time to root out the tares and winnow the chaff.